

From: C. Alexander Cohen
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/20/01 1:28pm
Subject: Settlement comment

To Whom It May Concern:

It seems to me that the proposed settlement is nothing short of a government cave-in. The terms neither correct the egregious behavior of Microsoft, nor contain any punishment for their past bad acts, nor any restitution for those businesses wounded or even killed by Microsoft's heavy-handed tactics.

Further, the proposed settlement enshrines forever Microsoft's 'right' to use their proven monopoly power to roll over the competition by imitating their technology, bundling it within the operating system and claiming it is necessary (when it isn't) - witness RealPlayer for example, and making it difficult to obtain competing products.

Their new system (XP) even forces the user to use the Microsoft product even when the customer has gone through the trouble of obtaining and installing other software, again on the bogus claim that it's necessary for some trumped-up reason!

The "Board of Wise Men," being under Redmond's thumb will have no real effect. The terms of the settlement are written in such an opaque way as to obviate any real responsibility adhering to Microsoft.

Additionally, the new Passport promises to block out (or at least steer the user away from) any but Microsoft's partners for non-related products reached by internet. Add to this, the methodology which will no doubt convince inexperienced users that it is required to send all manner of personal information, including credit card numbers, to Microsoft - whose security lapses are legendary!

Even after the settlement was announced, Microsoft blocked all browsers but their own (Internet Explorer - "IE") from accessing their portal site. Later, they 'relented' and allowed the most minor players (such as the browser Opera) access. They are, to this day, trying to block anyone from releasing information about the security holes in their software; on the excuse that it will lead someone to exploit them, meanwhile leaving the vast majority of users vulnerable.

Microsoft has no care for the user - only the users' money. Microsoft is a corporate thug of the worst (or nearly worst) kind. True, they are a cornerstone of our economy; but that should not relieve you of the responsibility; nor them of the onus to correct the situation. Remember that breakup in no way harmed the children of Standard Oil or AT&T.

The proposed settlement should be junked and Microsoft should be punished commensurately for their acts, both past and continuing. Anything less is a sell out.

Sincerely,

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